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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER

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9 January 1968

Poles Arrest US and Canadian Attaches

Two allied military attaches were detained by Polish authorities on 4 January in Bydgoszcz for "abusing their diplomatic immunity" by photographing military installations. Lt. Col. Metzger, Acting USARMA, and Lt. Col. Jefferson, Assistant Canadian Military Attache, were apprehended when Jefferson stopped before a Polish Air Force installation in downtown Bydgoszcz to photograph radar antennas on the roof. Both men were interrogated for nearly 12 hours and neither was permitted to phone his Embassy.

The cameras, film, military ID cards, and various personal items were confiscated by the Polish security police (UB) before the men were released and allowed to return to Warsaw. The US Embassy protested on 5 January the treatment accorded Metzger as a violation of his diplomatic immunity. A Polish Foreign Ministry official rejected the protest and said it would do no good to deny "that Metzger had a camera and took photographs because we might be showing you his camera and photographs," which when developed will include, along with Jefferson's, nearly forty snapshots of Polish military installations.

The Canadian Embassy made a similar representation on behalf of their attache on 6 January which was met with the same rebuff as ours. The Polish Foreign Ministry official, however, expressed "regret that the Canadian military attache had joined the US attache in open intelligence work." 25X1

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COMMENT: While military attaches everywhere perform this sort of intelligence collection its always embarrassing when one gets caught with his "hand in the cookie jar." This incident is doubly embarrassing in Warsaw where we recently concluded an agreement increasing the size of the military attache staff. Despite the obvious implications of the incident, the US intends to protest the violation of diplomatic immunity to counter Polish charges and hope that quiet will quickly be restored.

Yugoslav Government Threatens to Resign

The newspaper Politika has been accused by Radio Belgrade of being indiscreet for revealing that the federal government had threatened its collective resignation if the Federal Assembly failed to adopt a proposed series of economic measures for 1968. Two Assembly houses, the Economic and the Organizational-Political Councils, had rejected some of the measures, particularly one on taxation. Two roll calls were required to force through the compromise proposal to keep personal income taxes from exceeding 26 percent.

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COMMENT: This is the first time that the federal government has threatened to resign if its proposals were not accepted. According to the Assembly by-laws of May 1967, the government may resign if it does not agree with the views of the federal legislature. The only previous use of such tactics led to the short-lived resignation of the government of Slovenia in December 1967, when one of its social security bills was rejected by one house of the Slovenian Assembly.

Poles Claim US Not Interested in Peace

Poland has reiterated charges that the US is not interested in peace talks on Vietnam. Foreign Minister Rapacki told a press conference in Warsaw on 6 January that US declarations that it would stop the bombing if Hanoi gave any hint that it was willing to negotiate are "something worse than empty phrases." Rapacki declared that the US "does not want negotiations at present" but side-stepped questions regarding reports that the US thwarted peace efforts in 1966 by staging air raids on Hanoi.

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Trybuna Ludu, the leading party daily, carried a story on 8 January by its Washington correspondent headlined "Why the US Bides Its Time." The story claimed that "influential circles in the US" camouflage outright rejections of offers to negotiate by stalling for time. During the interim, the paper states, the US then steps up its offensive in Vietnam, and cited the recent "big" air raid on Haiphong which allegedly resulted in damage to a Soviet ship as Washington's response to North Vietnamese deputy premier Trinh's recent offer to negotiate after a cessation of the bombing.

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US Ambassador and Chinese Charge Meet in Warsaw

Ambassador Gronouski and acting Chinese Charge Chen Tung talked for more than two hours on 8 January. This was the 134th meeting since 1955 and the first time that Peking was represented by someone below the ambassadorial level.

The absence of Ambassador Wang is believed by some observers to indicate that the Chinese wish to convey the impression that they have nothing of significance to discuss with the US and thus have downgraded the level of the talks. The next meeting is set for 29 May. Chen evaded reporters' questions as to whether Wang would attend. The Chinese Charge described his replacement of Wang at the latest meeting as only a "provisional measure." Ambassador Gronouski called the talks "invaluable" and said that the US "continued to hope that the meetings can serve to reduce tension between our two countries and ultimately throughout East Asia."

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COMMENT: Wang is believed to be in Peking; he left Warsaw after his meeting with Gronouski in June 1967.

Cardinal Wyszynski Injured Slightly in Accident

Stefan Cardinal Wyszynski, Roman Catholic Primate of Poland, was reportedly "shaken up" but otherwise unhurt in an automobile accident on an icy highway near Poznan on 5 January. An early report claimed that a priest riding with the Cardinal received first aid following the accident but did not mention any injury to Wyszynski. In a subsequent report the following day, however, the Cardinal was noted as being unable to take part in an Epiphany mass

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in Warsaw. The 66-year old prelate allegedly was bandaged about the face due to a cut sustained in the accident.

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COMMENT: The car skidded into a tree and, as is often the case in accidents of this type, the Cardinal may not have felt the effects until the following day. The Cardinal's secretariat confirmed that Wyszynski and the two priests accompanying him all received "slight" injuries but apparently there was no cause for alarm.

Yugoslavs Chide US on Bombing Investigation

The Belgrade press has again criticized the US government's handling of the investigation of the bombing by emigres of Yugoslav diplomatic installations in Washington, San Francisco, and Chicago in January 1967. Both Politika and Borba on 4 and 5 January accuse the US of not wishing to bring the culprits to justice.

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COMMENT: The grand jury which has been hearing the case for many months has suspended its deliberation with no indictments. Apparently US authorities know the emigres involved, but lack sufficient evidence for prosecution.

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NOTE: THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ABOVE REPRESENT
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